RESTORATION REVIEW

We have never held that a return to New Testament Christianity and acceptance of what we think constitutes it are necessarily one and the same thing; and at needed moments the fact has been recalled that we must ever be ready to diminish or enlarge, as further truth breaks forth from God's word. — *Lancelot Oliver*

See *Two Approaches to Unity*, p. 107

Vol. 23, No. 6 Leroy Garrett, Editor June, 1981

Volume 23, No. 6 **Leroy Garrett, Editor** **June 1981**

Jesus Today. . .

ON BEING KIN TO JESUS

Whoever shall do the will of My Father who is *in heaven, he* is *My brother and sister and mother.* - Matt. 12:50

It is a remarkable promise: *that we are most kin to Jesus in doing the Father's will!* Even more than blood kin.

One of the most interesting persons Ouida and I ever knew was a mentally disturbed brother who supposed he was Jesus. Years ago I wrote about him in this journal, a sympathetic treatment, for I always had positive feelings toward him. He was a grandson of Decima Campbell Barclay, the tenth child of Alexander Campbell. Julian Barclay was a majestic looking man, standing well over six feet and weighing far more than 200 pounds. His long beard and rough clothing made him something of a sight in Bethany when we went there to teach two decades ago.

Julian set me to thinking of how it must feel to think of yourself as Jesus. Can you conjure yourself into such a mood? The poor brother would sit in our livingroom (as on one occasion) and open his palms to us, explaining that sometimes the nail marks would show, and would talk to us as if he were the Lord himself, all in perfect sincerity of course. While he seemed harmless, the president of the college warned the students not to take chances, for he was indeed a very ill man. We were thankful that he did not have to be institutionalized. Unmarried and free, he wandered here and there, mostly around Bethany, always peacefully and always Christlike.

Some years back we received word that dear Julian died on a bus while on a farm-labor circuit, and it was sometime before they could identify him. They brought him back to Bethany and buried him near his great grandfather, Alexander Campbell. It all impressed me as very ironic. But there was a tradition of insanity in the Campbell clan, Alex's own brother being suspect, a doctor who tampered with the dead after they were buried, or so it was rumored. It is also rumored that when the brother died, Alex buried him in an unknown, unmarked grave, lest his enemies take vengeance. But enough of that kind of thing.

It must be something else to think you are Jesus, insane or not. After all, what is insanity? Ouida was always impressed with Julian's brilliance, and one might not notice, ordinarily, that anything was wrong. He could hold his own with any of the professors around and on any subject --- all from reading and thinking! And yet the man was crazy, or

so they said. At Christmas time each year when the college choir sang the great Hallelujah Chorus we would all stand --- in honor of the Christ who lives, but up in the balcony *sat* Julian Barclay, off to himself, enjoying the honor! He would send all of us Christmas cards, signed by the Lord himself!

The redeeming feature to this fantastic story is that Julian, who lived as a recluse on a nearby hill, *was* like Christ --- gentle, self-effacing, humble, forgiving, nonviolent. When some of the college boys had some fun at his expense, hurling him to the ground and relieving him of his beard, he responded with loving forbearance, when he could have (and should have!) given them all the whipping they deserved. I would sometimes say to Ouida, *There* is *one real Christian in this village and he's crazy!* Shades of Dostoevski's village idiot in *The Idiot.*

I must concede utter failure in supposing myself to be Jesus, and I do little better in imagining myself in his situation before the Sanhedrin or at Gethsemane, or even in a teaching situation alongside the sea of Galilee. This must be because there is no way for us to fathom infinite suffering and injustice, or a person who is infinity itself. There is no way for mortal man to comprehend Jesus, and one would have to be beside himself to presume he has done so.

That makes the promise of kinship with him all the more remarkable. Closer than a brother or sister, a blood-kin sibling! Or closer than a mother, the one who gave him birth! We are closer to Jesus than that, *if* we do the will of the heavenly Father.

What do you suppose Jesus meant, *precisely,* by that condition? Kinship that is closer than a brother, sister, or mother is based upon obedience to God, implicit and exact obedience, we may presume, according to one's understanding. That is the condition. Since Jesus gives no specifics, not in this context at least, we may conclude that he refers to *general* obedience. This does not mean, of course, that we obey the Father in a general kind of way, allowing only certain pet sins into our lives. Rather it means that we are committed to Him, body, soul and spirit, and are resolved to obey Him in all things, limited only by knowledge and frailty.

Out of weakness we will fall short of perfect obedience; out of ignorance that is unwillful (since an insatiable desire to know is part of obedience ignorance will never be willful) we will fail to do all that we should. So, doing the Father's will is for one to lovingly and eagerly do all that he knows God wants Him to do. This would be *general* obedience, which means that there may be some particulars within the Father's will that one has not yet learned, but that he is obedient insofar as he understands.

Jesus is really talking about sincerity before the Father, the real meaning of sincerity. Sincerity *seeks* God, hungering and thirsting for light and more light. There may yet be darkness in his life, but he accepts the light as it breaks into his life.

The Lord is saying that this is the person that is *really* kin to him, closer than any fleshly relationship. This is far different from conforming to some church's check-list of "things to do" in obeying. It means to long for God as the hart pants for the water brook or like a babe hungers for milk. One may be a weak person and yet obedient in the sense Jesus is talking about, for he *wants* righteousness. We "do the Father's will" more by what we really are and what we want to be more than by our goodness. One does not have to be an expert musician to love music or an artist to appreciate art, and so one might be very inexpert about "virtue" and "goodness" and yet be what Jesus is talking about.

This is why some prostitutes were closer to Jesus than some Pharisees, with all their expertise. It is reassuring that we do not have to be righteous to be blessed, but to hunger and thirst for it. When Jesus identified those closest to him by saying "Here are my mother and my brothers," he pointed to his disciples. But they were not the reverend clergy of his day, but men from the common walks of life who were not "righteous" except in the sense that they were being made new by the new dimension in their lives.

This shows us that spiritual kinship comes before the physical, however honored the physical may be. Perhaps this is what Jesus was teaching when he told one of his disciples who wished to turn back and bury his father: "Follow me, and leave the dead to bury their dead" (Matt. 8:22).

Again Jesus points to this truth in Matt. 10:37-39: "Anyone who prefers father or mother to me is not worthy of me. Anyone who prefers son or daughter to me is not worthy of me. Anyone who does not take his cross and follow in my footsteps is not worthy of me. Anyone who finds his life will lose it; anyone who loses his life for my sake will find it."

As believers we *are* kin to our Lord, his very closest kin, and we are to prefer that relationship to all others. Following in his steps must mean that we are to do the will of the Father as he did, and in doing this we must be willing to suffer in this world as he did. If we are out to "find ourselves" in this world, which must refer to an ego-centered life of fame, fortune, and pleasure, then we lose ourselves. But if we are in this world to "lose ourselves," which refers to doing the will of the Father, wherever that may lead us, then we find ourselves. The glorious contradiction: *we find ourselves by losing ourselves.* The world is not prepared to understand this great truth, and too few believers are willing to accept it as their rule of life.

But when we do accept it and thus make God's will paramount in our lives, obeying Him lovingly and without reservation, we become closer to Jesus than a brother or sister or even a mother. That promise should make all the difference in the world. --- *the Editor*

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DRILLING TOGETHER DEEP IN THE HEART OF TEXAS

There is a story out of west Texas that we think will encourage you, especially if you suppose the Churches of Christ are stuck on dead center and are unable to move toward a more fraternal relationship with other churches.

It is one of those typical Texas towns so small that it has but three churches, a Baptist, Methodist, and Church of Christ. The latter is ministered to by a student preacher from ACU. His sermons were of the more "open" variety, which led one of the elders to say something like this to him, "In view of what you are saying, maybe we should reach out more to other believers, such as doing something with the Baptists." Once the minister recovered from the shock of his preaching having such a positive effect, he agreed that what he was saying implied that they should have fellowship with such folk as the Baptists. Our readers who live far from Texas, as most of you do, may not realize that Texans are congenial folk, probably friendlier than average when compared world-wide, and that *west* Texans are notoriously friendly. If you get west of Abilene they will even carry your wallet for you, and it just won't do to talk about what they will do for you if you get west of Pecos. All of us Texans know that we have to doff the hat to west Texans when it comes to friendliness, if not pass the hat. Even church folk are very friendly, *except on Sunday.* Through the week you would suppose they were all kin or held stock in the same oil field or cattle ranch, but on Sunday they don't speak to each other, not near their separate churches at least. And as often as not the churches are across the street from each other. Even unto the fourth generation there is no such thing as stepping across the street to say hello. Their kids date and they all do business with each other, but on Sunday there may be a furtive glance to the folk across the street, but it is strictly a matter of *Look but don't touch.*

I violated this custom one Sunday when I was almost as far west as Pecos by bolting across the street and paying my Christian respects. They figured I was out there from Arkansas or maybe Oklahoma, or at least that I was up to something, for Baptists and Church of Christ folk skip Sundays when it comes to living together. So you can imagine what the Methodists thought when our folk invited the Baptists to a picnic, an old-fashioned *church* picnic. The report indicates that it was a super picnic and terrific fellowship.

The next step was for the two groups to get together one Sunday evening and pray, sing, and study. Now they are doing it on a regular basis, getting together once a month and praising God and studying His word, *together.*

As the apostle Paul spoke of the faith of the Gentiles moving the Jews to jealousy, this caused the Methodists to want to know why they were left out, so now they are in on it!

The vast majority of our people, as well as most Baptists, would be cheered by this report. We did not *choose* to be isolated from others as we have been so long; it was forced upon us by a well-meaning but misguided leadership. An old fallacy has hung heavily upon us: *if we have fellowship with folk we thereby approve of their errors.* This is to equate fellowship with endorsement, which is an impossible premise, even when applied to fellowship with each other in Churches of Christ, for we disagree with each other almost as much as we do with the Baptists. This oasis of good news from west Texas, where our folk usually wind it so tight that it breaks, is due to responsible leadership. An elder followed through on what he saw to be right, and dared to say what is seldom said, *Then why don't we . . .*? There are always those that will say, *But we never have!* But that is what responsible leadership is about. When truth glorious, liberating truth --- flashes a green light, the courageous leader will say, *Let's go! Forward!* Never mind about the past, which is often dead, debilitating, and sectarian. Let my people go! It may not be all that important whether we picnic with the Baptists, but it is terribly important that we be free enough to do so.

And the Methodists wanting to get in on it! Baptists, Methodists, and Church of Christ people picnicking and praying and praising together, and that deep in the heart of Texas! And some of you wonder how I can be optimistic about the future! If these things are done while it is yet green, just wait until it is dry!

One thing further. When this happy report, which is wholly reliable, came this way, I thought of Thomas Campbell's impressive line about the sinfulness of division. Division among believers, he said, is anti-Christian, anti-Scriptural, and anti-natural. Anti-natural! Most incisive. I think of this at family reunions where you can talk about everything but religion, even when they are all believers. What is more contrary to nature than for folk to force themselves *not* to talk about what is the dearest thing to them, their faith in Jesus. So often, even among ourselves, when the married kids come home with their families we can't talk religion, for someone has had some new thought or experience that she dare not mention, lest it spoil the visit home.

And what is more natural than for believers, *all* believers, in west Texas to get together and enjoy each other in the Lord. After all, if they can drill together for oil in each other's back yard, they ought to be able to mine the word together in each other's churches. - *the Editor*

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TWO APPROACHES TO UNITY

After years of study in the history of unity efforts I conclude that there are two, and perhaps only two, approaches to the problem of a divided Church of Christ upon earth. It is well for all those that profess any interest in the unity of all believers to pause occasionally and examine the method they are using and judge it in terms of its effectiveness. These two methods may be identified as follows:

1. To restore the New Testament church in its pristine purity, thus demonstrating to divided Christendom what the true church really is, and invite others to do as we have done and thus become like ourselves. This method implies that the restored church would gradually absorb all other believers into its own fold, thus overcoming sectarianism and achieving unity. As for *method,* this approach implies an aloofness from other believers and a separation from all other churches. This approach could be called the separatist method, or the conformist method, or the restoration method.

2. To assume that the ideal, united church, the image of which we see reflected in Scripture, though perhaps not in exact terms, is yet to be realized upon this earth, the first century not excepted, and therefore all believers should cooperate with each other in the continual quest for truth and a united church. As for *method,* this approach calls for mutual acceptance of each other as equal Christians without necessarily approving of all that is believed or practiced, and cooperating with each other in all ways that are possible and appropriate.

The first method has very largely been the approach of "the Restoration Movement" in this country, especially of Churches of Christ and Christian Churches, which historian A. T. DeGroot has been pleased to call Church of Christ Number One and Two.

De Groot argues that there is precedent for this device, for the Plymouth Brethren (a "restoration" church by the way) is divided eight ways and are so listed by the Census Bureau, i.e., Plymouth Brethren No. 1, No.2, and right on through Plymouth Brethren No. 8. So, it may just as well to speak of Church of Christ No.1, No.2, etc., and one could come up with a list as long or longer than that of the Plymouth Brethren.

This spectacle of a supposed unity people dividing again and again should cause one to become very suspicious of the validity of the first approach to unity. Indeed, this very approach is itself divisive! When people adopt a rigid view of the restored church and presume that they are that one and only true church, it is only a matter of time until they will divide among themselves over some method or doctrine, thus adding to the list one more *one and only true church.*

The assumption of *finality* in restoration is the fallacy of approach number 1. Restoration must be seen as an ongoing task never fully realized this side of the millennium. We *do* restoration continually; it must not be something we *have* done. It should be a methodology and ideology that we adopt, realizing that other Christians are not convinced of this approach. In the search for truth we must come to share with others, conceding, that we have as much to learn as we have to teach. In the quest for the "one, holy, apostolic, catholic church" we must be persuaded that it is an ideal that no religious group has attained, or even all of them combined, and we need each other's help in the mission.

To set ourselves apart and have no fellowship or cooperation with any other church is self-defeating in a unity mission, for *how,* pray tell me, can we unite with other believers when we have no contact with them? It assumes that we are the only Christians and that others only need to repent and be like us, while it is highly probable that there are others closer to Christ than we are. We should be eager to join hands with such ones in all ways possible, and surely we can do some things together. Just because we may not be able to do everything together should not mean that we can do nothing together.

The second approach was the approach of our pioneers, who, from their first churches cooperated with other churches, joining their associations and working with them in the publication and distribution of Scripture. Moreover, they were "Christians only," never supposing that they were the only Christians. Their mission was to unite the Christians in all the sects, which itself recognized that there were other Christians. Nor did they suppose that they were the church to the exclusion of others, for they believed the church has always existed and that it is inviolably under God's care and will never be destroyed.

The good sense of our pioneers, and the method they adopted, is reflected in this bit of wisdom from a British pioneer, Lancelot Oliver. Mark his words well.

> We have never held that a return to New Testament Christianity and acceptance of what we think constitutes it are necessarily one and the same thing; and at needed moments the fact has been recalled that we must ever be ready to diminish or enlarge, as further truth breaks forth from God's word.

An application of that wisdom would have spared us many a woe. Our plea for a return to New Testament Christianity must be distinguished from what we believe constitutes that return. We can be confident in the ideal of New Testament Christianity, and we can and should plead for it. But *our* understanding of what this involves may be only partly right, and so we invite others to help us realize the ideal. So, we can be certain of the validity of our plea, while suspicious of our own mastery of it. - *the Editor*

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Highlights in Restoration History . . .

RESTORATIONISM

Students of English history will associate the term restoration with the return of the Stuarts to the British throne in 1660 in the person of Charles II. Charles I was executed in 1649 and Oliver Cromwell, a Puritan, ruled, not as a monarch, but as Lord Protector of the Commonwealth. It was not like England to be without a king, and it did not last long. Historians refer to the reign of the Stuarts, Charles II and his brother James II, following the Cromwellian rebellion, as the *Restoration,* a reference to the revival of the monarchy. It was a turning point in English history in that it settled an issue that had caused civil disorder for nearly a century: there was no way to convert the Church of England to Puritanism.

This motif in English history has nothing to do with the use of the term restoration, or its Latin equivalent *restitution,* in church history, for religionists made use of the concept long before the time of Charles II. There was even a book written on the subject, entitled *The Restitution of Christianity,* as early as the 1550's by Michael Servetus, who was executed for heresy by John Calvin's court in Geneva.

An Anabaptist, Servetus believed what has always been basic to restorationism: that the true, apostolic church went into apostasy, that all existing churches are false, and that the only way to have the true church again is by a restoration of primitive Christianity. This is also known as primitivism, which implies that the New Testament provides a detailed pattern for the church, so that in any age the true church can be reproduced by faithful adherence to the New Testament pattern, irrespective of how far the church may go into apostasy in the intervening centuries.

Servetus was joined by other Anabaptists who rejected the Reformation churches because they were not sufficiently apostolic and primitive, and because, like the Roman church, they were not divorced from the state. John Campanus, William Postel, and

Bernard Rothmann all wrote books on restorationism in the sixteenth century, charging that the true church had fallen away and calling for a restoration or restitution of the primitive order. All four of the men called for a restoration of the apostolic ordinances of baptism and communion, with Servetus setting forth an elaborate theology of baptism, in which he insisted that only believer's baptism by immersion is scriptural. To be saved, he contended, one must both believe and be baptized. While Campanus had a broader view as to where truth might be found, calling as he did for a "Catholic restitution" that sought truth "among the sects and all the heretics," he nonetheless revealed an attitude that usually characterizes restorationists: that what they have "restored" is the true church, while others are sects and heretics.

This "restoration motif," as historians identify it, was so prevalent among the Anabaptists that Harvard historian George H. Williams, after extensive research in what he calls the radical reformation, concluded: "So widespread was restorationism (restitutionism) as the sixteenth-century version of primitivism that it may be said to be one of the marks of the Radical Reformation." Franklin Littell, another authority on the underground Reformation, has suggested that the best term to describe the movement is "the Restitution." The Anabaptists have many heirs in the modern church, such as the Amish, Mennonites, Quakers, Plymouth Brethren, and Church of the Brethren, who stress various motifs of primitivism, whether pacifism, footwashing, holy kiss, or austere means of dress and transportation. But restorationism has also made its way in varying degrees across a large section of Protestantism. One historian counts 176 restorationist sects, each claiming to be the true "restored" church, and asks the embarrassing question, "What kind of book is our Bible that it could yield 176 different conceptions of the Church of Christ, each deemed of such importance that it required a separate church to be founded upon it."

Prominent restorationists in the South are three churches of the same historic origin: Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), Christian Churches (Independent), and Churches of Christ (often distinguished as being noninstrumental music, another primitivism). The Disciples of Christ have in recent years all but discarded the restoration ideal in lieu of ecumenicity, believing that unity and restoration are inimical to each other, though both motifs are admittedly a part of their heritage. The other two churches, being more conservative theologically, are adamantly restorationist, insisting that the restoration of primitive Christianity is the means to unity. But even these two churches are not in fellowship with each other, disagreeing on what constitutes restoration, such as the question of instrumental music. This is typical of restorationism, which tends to be polarizing, as was evident with the various sects of the Anabaptist, who would not even ride together on the same boat when they came to the new world.

Alexander Campbell, the principal founder of these churches that identify themselves as “the Restoration Movement,” was actually within the reformed tradition rather than the restorationist, calling his unity movement the “New Reformation,” which he saw as a continuation of the work of Luther and Calvin. Unlike the Anabaptists and restorationists generally, who believe the church ceased to exist, Campbell believed in the inviolability of the church, even though it may always need reform. It was typical of him, therefore, to say, “Let us see a reformation in fact -- a reformation in sentiment, in practice -- a reformation in faith and manners.” While he spoke of restoration, especially “the restoration of the ancient order,” it was in reference to restoring *to* the church, which he believed existed in his time, things he thought were neglected, rather than restoring the church itself, as if it did not exist, which is a basic premise of restorationism. - *Leroy Garrett*

(This is a contribution to the *Dictionary of Southern Religion,* edited by Samuel S. Hill, to be published soon by Mercer University Press. We thought it would interest our readers. - *Ed.)*

Oh Lord, make me an instrument of Thy peace!
Where hate is, may I bring love;
Where offence has been given or taken, may I bring pardon;
Where there is discord, may I bring fellowship;
Where there is error, may I bring truth;
Where there is doubt, may I bring faith;
Where there is despair, may I bring hope
Where there is darkness, may I bring light;
Where there is sadness, may I bring joy;
Master, let me seek rather to console than to be consoled;
To understand than to be understood;
To love rather than to be loved;
For it is in giving that I receive,
In forgetting myself that I find myself;
In pardoning that I receive pardon;
In dying that I am born again to the life eternal. -- *St. Francis of Assisi*

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Pilgrimage of Joy. . . No. 56

PEOPLE AND PLACES

W. Carl Ketcherside

One of the outstanding gatherings of men in the United States is the Cavalier Men's Retreat in Virginia. I have now spoken there three times. When I went in 1974 it was held at Oak Hill Christian Assembly grounds, just outside of Richmond. Now it meets some seventy miles away, near the little village of Yale. There were 460 men present the first time I was there. Now it consistently attracts more than 500. Campers are parked all over the hillside and tents pitched throughout the pines. It is a strictly "come as you are event" and no one dresses up for it. The music is under the direction of "The Gospel Lads," who direct audience participation as well as render specials. Those who attend go back home refreshed in spirit, and ready to try and remove mountains for the Master. It is truly an inspirational something. I flew next to Saskatoon, where brethren met me and took me way south to Macrorie. Here it is that a kind of wilderness camp has been carved out by the brethren. Room has been made in a deep valley for the pitching of tents and the parking of camping vehicles. A tractor stands by to snake the cars out in case of rain. Brethren come from all over Canada and part of the United States. All eat breakfast together. At noon camp stoves and campfires are going all over the place as every family prepares for itself. There are meetings in the morning and evening, the latter generally around a fire which is needed occasionally when the sun goes down. The pace of life is slow and relaxing with the afternoon given over to games in which anyone may feel free to participate.

During the light refreshment period at night, choruses are sung around the dying embers. The young people are exceptionally good singers, and the wooded hills resound to the sound of their voices. Cecil Bailey, from Winnipeg, Manitoba, and Harold Fox, from Malta, Montana, were the other two speakers. I was endeared to them by their seriousness of purpose and their love for the Word of God. I spoke analytically on the Ephesian Letter. It was hard to bid each other goodbye when the time of separation arrived. I had to hurry back to the states in order to get to the School of the Ministry, an annual feature conducted at Milligan College in Tennessee. Milligan is a famous school because of its origin and its setting. It is one of the loveliest places in the world. I joined Knofel Staton, Mildred Phillips and Olin Hays on the program. The entire Vernon family was present and regularly provided us with superb music. I came to believe that Knofel Staton was one of the most capable men in the restoration movement in our day. Young and vigorous, he was also filled with knowledge. He talked about marriage and I thought I had never heard

another series to equal it. Sister Phillips was excellent in her presentation of personalities she had known in the restoration movement. She is the daughter of the late P. H. Welshimer of Canton, Ohio, whose name has already become legendary: Brother Hays was also in his usual excellent form. It provided a good time for all.

It was about this time I learned that in England, Carlton Melling, who had been gradually losing his sight, resigned as editor of the Scripture Standard. He was succeeded by the efficient James Gardiner of Edinburgh. The paper was once under the editorship of Walter Crosthwaite, so during my lifetime had been blessed by three dedicated men, capable and scholarly. It was good to realize that it had been entrusted to good hands.

The war had made a greater impact upon the British brethren than they had at first realized. Those who lived in Scotland, England and Wales, were all pacifists. During my two trips among them I found only two men who believed it was right for a Christian to bear arms in defense of his country. During World War I they had suffered indescribable physical torture because of their conscience on the matter. They had been thrown into prison and starved on bread and water. Some of them always bore the marks of their suffering.

But World War II brought among them a different breed, men from the United States, some of them in uniform, some of them conscientious objectors, but who tried never to allow anything to interfere with their devotion to the Lord. These men, and some of their contemporaries went back to Europe after the hostilities had ceased, taking with them American ideas and methods of evangelism. In Italy, Finland, Germany, France, the Netherlands, and even behind the Iron Curtain, as well as in England, they planted congregations of believers. Neither group was as tolerant of the other as they might have been. Challenges were issued to debate, and to all intents and purposes, a divided group of believers was the result. At present it appears that both sides continue in a kind of suspended animation, watching each other, talking about each other, but seldom talking to one another. A new paper has been started, and there has been a sad polarization.

September 13, 14 I went to the Men’s Retreat at Round Lake Christian Assembly, in Ohio. There were 601 men registered for the occasion. Don DeWelt was the other speaker, and he did a masterful job. Many years ago, when we first began to try and bring some degree of understanding and tolerance into an area where hostility had always raged, Leroy Garrett and I met with Don and Seth Wilson at Nowata, Oklahoma, in an epoch-making forum which was conducted openly and fairly. My brother Paul presided over it. At the time I came to have a deep appreciation for the men whose position we opposed. We have grown closer together through the years.

Don has taught at Ozark Bible College for years. He has always been an advocate of intense evangelism coupled with nurture in the Word. He has published a whole series of books devoted to helping men understand and teach the Word of God. One of his most noted accomplishments was. that of bringing back the entire set of Campbell's Harbinger. His latest feat has been the returning to print of the periodicals by Walter Scott, with "The Voice of the Golden Oracle" as the final volume. I consider it one of the greatest volumes I have ever read. Don's method of public presentation is unique. One of the blessings of it comes from his ability to carry on a conversation with himself. It was a great blessing to me to be associated with him. The men all loved him!

Four days later I went to Hanover, New Mexico. To get there, it was necessary to fly to Albuquerque, and take a small commuter plane which flew by way of Truth or Consequences. We landed at Silver City, which was founded in 1870 to mine the gold and silver ores in the foothills of the Mongolion Mountains. Although the supply of these precious metals is about exhausted, copper mining has displaced the work of digging them out. It is thriving. The little town of Hanover lies in sight of a copper mine. The handful of saints meeting there were precious in their faith. The sisters brought lunch and we ate together at noon and again at night after the meetings. The Mexican-flavored food was super. We lingered on in the company of each other, unwilling to break the magic spell of fellowship which engulfed us all in its embrace.

Al Botts, who had been successful in forging a career in the Far West, had returned to Silver City, where he was engaged in his trade, while preaching for the little band of saints. He was not caught in the sectarian noose at all, and extended the love of Christ to all who deserved it. I was refreshed greatly by the simplicity of life in this remote village which was literally "the end of the trail." Ghost towns and abandoned mining villages dot the mountains. Owls fly in and out of deserted houses. Coyotes make their dens under the ruins of old taverns which once echoed to raucous laughter. But there is nothing ghostly about the fellowship of the saints. It is genuine.

The following month I went to Solsberry, Indiana, where James Root ministered. He had been a successful newspaper editor, but an inner gnawing had driven him to become a preacher of the Word. So he left the desk and went out "not knowing whither he went." He was never able to divorce himself completely from his former vocation. One who has smelled printer's ink never is. So he continued to report the news and do book reviews for the paper, but his work for Christ became very challenging and satisfying. Fortunately, he was not caught up in a lot of the political strivings which seem to be part of the religious establishment. So he and the little band of saints were making progress. This was evidenced in the capacity crowds which attended the meetings. The house was filled every night.

It was while I was there that I came to realize the urbanization of our culture and the words of Jacques Ellul struck me with full force. He said, “We are in the city even when we are in the country for today the country (and soon this will be true of the immense Asian steppe) is only an annex of the city,” Solsberry had once been a quiet Hoosier village. The old country store was still there. It stocked everything from horse collars to kerosene lamps. You could still buy an ice cream cone for a nickel. There was a bench behind the stove where “the spit and argue club used to meet.” But times had changed. The village was now the bedroom of the city. Every morning people arose from their sleep and headed for the city to work. Some of them were on split shifts. Times had changed and were still changing before our very eyes.

My next work was in Saint Louis, Michigan, where a congregation was thriving under the direction of Henry MacAdams. We had been together years before near South Bend, Indiana. It was good to see him again. He was loved by the people and respected in the community. I was pleased to see brethren from several wings of the non-instrument group come. Some of them were ill at ease at first, walking gingerly as if treading upon forbidden ground. But they were soon listening quite calmly and were resigned to the fact of where they were.

I went next to Beaverton, Oregon. Donald S. Cox was the minister, and I had the great privilege of staying in his wonderful home. Don is man intent upon following God’s leading as he understands it. He has a tremendous grasp of the sacred scriptures and a sense of the relevance of the good news to our present age. He is an excellent administrator, but seeks to lead the flock gently home. It was a tremendous blessing to be associated with him.

On August 9, Richard M. Nixon became the first president of these United States to resign from office. The day before he had made his farewell address to the nation admitting only to poor judgment. I had defended him until a few days before. When I became convinced that he was no longer speaking the truth I could not speak up for him. I was greatly disappointed. It seems incredible that a man who had held religious services in the White House could deceive the people of our land. But I was glad when the Watergate ordeal was over and Gerald Ford took office. I think he made a grave error in political judgment when, on September 8, he announced that he had unconditionally pardoned his predecessor for all crimes against the United States he “has committed or may have committed.” I do not think the public was ready for this and I do not think his reasons for doing it were all that logical.

It was December 19 before both Houses of Congress gave a majority vote of approval to Nelson Rockefeller as vice president. This came only after a lengthy and full investigation of the sources and use of his colossal wealth. For the first time the country had an unelected President and Vice President. Meanwhile two famous show personalities died after years on radio and television. Ed Sullivan passed away in New York on October 13, and Jack Benny died in Beverly Hills, California on December 26. The first was 73, the second was 80 years of age.

Change and decay were upon every hand. The small and the great were all subject to it. But it was a blessing to be in one whom it could not affect. It was with faith in Him I began what was to be the final year of publication of the *Mission Messenger*.

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RANDOM THOUGHTS

By Robert Meyers

Many have criticized that kind of congregational study which uses some shallow little workbook instead of digging into the great principles of Christianity and their meaning for today. The technique is inferior even for children, unless nothing else is possible, and it certainly has minimal value for adults.

I thought of this when I visited a congregation in Florida. For fifty minutes the teacher went from one person to the next, all adults, and asked the questions which were mimeographed on a sheet of paper. I observed that each person got ready for his own reply by quickly checking the Biblical verse written down after the question. Each person then read off the verse, was praised by the teacher, and the person next in line was addressed.

The questions went like this: “Who came to see Paul in Damascus?” The adult student answered, “Ananias.” “What did he tell Paul to do?” Answer: “Arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins.” When all the questions were answered, the teacher said we were finished for the morning.

And so out we went, into the world of atomic weapons and nuclear power, of cancer, famine, hatred and illiteracy. Spiritually, we all had on rompers that morning, and only juggled blocks in a playroom. We were totally unprepared by that study to apply Christian principles intelligently to the world we lived in. We knew the age of Methuselah when he died, the names of the judges, the sequence of Biblical books --- all the fringe details --- but little of real Christianity and its vital relation to life.

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BOOK NOTES

We are no longer going to be able to allow you to charge your order of books. We simply do not have the time that is now required to send out statements and do the necessary bookkeeping. We will have to ask you to send money with your order. If you cannot do this, we will send you an invoice on what you have requested, with the exact amount stated, and when you return this to us, with check enclosed, we will fill the order. This applies to all books except the bound volumes of this journal, which we will continue to mail out from year to year or every two years, as they are bound, to those who have made advance orders, with invoice enclosed. We hope you will understand our doing this and that it will not be too inconvenient for you.

We can be grateful that some of the great works on our history are being kept in print, for now at least. For decades unavailable at any price, you can now have Robert Richardson's *Memoirs of Alexander Campbell*, two volumes in one, handsomely bound, for 19.95 postpaid. Along with it you would do well to have the historical novel on Campbell's life, called *The Fool* of *God*, in paperback at 5.50 postpaid.

John T. Willis of Abilene has done a most resourceful volume on *The World and Literature of the Old Testament*, which deals with geography, archaeology, and history of OT times, as well as an account of the making of the books. 9.95 pp.

For 2.25 we will send you a copy of Thomas Campbell's *Declaration and Address*, which includes the *Last Will and Testament of the Springfield Presbytery,* two famous documents in Restoration history.

For 3.50 we will send you the new soft-cover edition of Barclay's *New Testament: A New Translation*, which has a introduction to each of the books.

The unabridged Edersheim on *The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah* is presently out of print, but the one-volume abridged edition, which is adequate for most readers, is available at 7.95 pp.

We can supply what we consider to be the best dictionary of the Bible for 16.95, *Westminster Dictionary of the Bible,* a handsome piece of work.

The Westminster Press features a series of helpful Christian Care Books that deal with pressing problems, such as *After Suicide*, *Coping with Abuse*, *Coping with Difficult People, Coping with Physical Disability, For Grandparents*, *Mid-Life Crises*, *Parents and*

Discipline, Parents of the Homosexual, When Your Parents Divorce, Two-Career Marriage. These are ideal for church libraries. 5.95 each pp.

Still available and always a favorite is William Barclay's *Daily Bible Study,* revised edition, all 18 vols. only 84.00 pp.

A book I am presently reading with great profit is F. F. Bruce, Paul: *Apostle of the Heart Set Free,* back in print at 15.95 pp.

We are pleased that our readers love church history, and we recommend a book that still bears an old price tag of only 4.50 pp., Harry Boer's *A Short History of the Early Church.*

Our bound volume for 1979-80 is now available at 8.50 (9.75 postpaid) which is only the cost of a two-year subscription, which makes the handsome binding free. With its appropriate dust jacket, we think you will like it. All three of our previous double volumes are out of print, but you can still order the single volumes for 1977 and 1978 at 5.50 each.

HISTORY BOOK SOON READY

We are pleased to announce the tentative date of Oct. 1 for the publication of *The Stone-Campbell Movement: An Anecdotal History of Three Churches* by Leroy Garrett. The pre-publication price of the 850-page book is 17.95, the regular price 19.95. We encourage you to place your order with us at once. For this book you need send no money in advance. You will be billed when the book is shipped.

This book is the study of a *movement,* with each chapter having that word in its title, and since we tell many stories within the big Story, we call it an anecdotal history. Some of the chapter titles are: *From Philosophers to Theologians:* European Influences on the Movement; *James O'Kelly and Rice Haggard:* The American Prelude to the Movement; *Barton W. Stone:* The Movement In Its Inception in Kentucky; *Thomas Campbell:* The Movement In Its Inception in Pennsylvania and Virginia; *Alexander Campbell:* The Movement in Design.

Later chapters include: *Heretics and Defectors:* The Movement Seeks A Norm; *Pioneers on the Frontier:* The Movement Moves West and South; *Editor Bishops:* The Movement in Controversy; *More Editor Bishops:* The Movement Divides. Eighteen chapters in all lay bare the real story of how a unity movement with a glorious "Plea" became one of the most divisive episodes in modern church history, and the real reasons for this. Those

who have read sample chapters in advance report that it is interesting, informative, and easy-to-read, with one adding that some of it is "painful. "

If you order now you get the book for 17.95, and you can order as many as you like. But send no money until you receive the book in the fall.

Some of you may be interested in the immediate speaking engagements of the editor, which have been curtailed this summer because of the need to work on the history book. July 18-19, Marietta, Ga. (Contact Bob Chafin, Marietta Christian Church, 971-0391); Aug. 16-21, Salem, In. (Contact Robert W. Campbell, Rt. 3, Salem, In. 47167); Sept. 24-27, Flint, Mi. (Contact Amos Ponder, 1269 Pickwick P., Flint, Mi. 48507).

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OUR CHANGING WORLD

The Arcadia Church of Christ in Arcadia, Ca. recently had Dr. Donald McGavran, "the father of the church growth movement," as a guest speaker. They introduced him as "one of the most significant Christian leaders to arise from the Restoration church tradition," an accolade with which we would agree, for he has impacted the study of missions more than any other man of this century. Of Disciples background, he was a professor of missions at Fuller Seminary and onetime professor at Bethany College. We are pleased that the Arcadia church is free enough to draw upon men of this kind. The church also recognizes the church calendar, observing that Dr. McGavran was speaking on Pentecost Sunday. It does not sound exactly like us, but if the Church of Christ honored the church calendar any at all, surely it would be Pentecost Sunday! After all, that is when the Church of Christ began, wasn't it? Pentecost Sunday, 33 A.D., 9 a.m.!

As with most denominations, there is a shortage of pulpits among Churches of Christ, with preachers waiting in the marketplace ready to be hired. Many preachers have gone into "secular" work, unable to find pulpits. One Dallas church, which is but an average job, had 42 applicants when we last heard, with others coming in. One church near Ft. Worth began to get calls the same day their preacher resigned. It is phenomenal how the word gets around. While our folk have no general clearing house for such business, one apparently is not needed. The average pay these days is around $22,000-$23,000 with parsonage, $25,000-$30,000 without. One preacher looking for a job predicted that the pay might well decrease in a glutted market. He called one church with an opening and an elder said, "You can send us your application and we will put it with all the rest." This preacher, a college graduate, has decided to give up and take a secular job. An elder in

Houston confided in us his concern over the caliber of the men entering the Church of Christ ministry. “Our most promising young men are entering other professions,” he said with some alarm, fearful that the “preacher school” type would soon dominate our pulpits. But then again let’s not underestimate the preacher schools, for they are not as stereotyped as one might think.

The Mountain Heights Church of Christ in Denver, where Bruce Wadzeck ministers, no longer has a Sunday or Wednesday evening service. On those nights the believers scatter over the city, meeting in 60-80 homes, often in non-members’ homes. In this way they reach out to people who would never come to their building. In the past year they have baptized an average of one a day. Around 1,000 now gather for the assembly on Sunday morning. Each house church has a leader; all the leaders periodically meet together to discuss their problems and pray for the work.

Another unusual congregation is the Bammel Road Church of Christ in Houston, which in 1977 had a one-Sunday contribution of $1,000,000, which was then a record. Starting with the proverbial handful in a school only eight years ago, their attendance now consistently exceeds 1,000. They have an extensive missions program, both at home and abroad, much of their work being behind the Iron Curtain. In their recent *Eastern European Mission* they accounted for their rapid growth as: visionary leadership, determination to meet the needs of people, commitment to evangelism, exciting worship assemblies, involvement of each member, a loving fellowship. Joe Schubert has been the minister from the outset. Becoming something of an authority on church growth, Joe has started a program in which he hopes to share his findings with other churches. Their address is: 2700 FM 1960, W. Houston, Tx. 77068.

One of the most significant developments among Churches of Christ in the past decade and among the most promising for the 80’s is the Mission Training and Resource Center in Pasadena, Ca., which is unusually well-equipped to help churches develop meaningful and effective mission programs. In a recent essay in *Mission*, the Center’s vice president, Bob Douglas, says that while they are strongly associated with the Churches of Christ, they adhere to the Restoration tradition of “Christians only, but not the only Christians.” Their eye is on the “unreached peoples,” the hundreds of millions that are not Christians in any sense. There is a lot of waste, duplication of effort, ignorance, and ineffectiveness in our mission programs. This Center, led by four Ph.D.’s in missions and related areas, can be most helpful in providing what they call “a multifaceted undertaking which ultimately’ must include social concerns such as relief development, and social justice, as well as proclamation, church planting, and discipling.” They conduct seminars for churches and do “on the scene” planning in mission fields. The Ph.D. ‘s are more than scholars in missiology, being men of extensive on-the field missionary experience. Their address is

221 E. Walnut, Suite 271, Pasadena, Ca. 91101. The Center is funded by concerned Church of Christ business men.

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READERS' EXCHANGE

I was baptized into Jesus Christ in 1975 at a Church of Christ in Fairfield, California while serving in the Air Force. Being an atheist with memories of the Catholic Church as a child, the biblically centered teachings of the Church of Christ thrilled me almost as much as my salvation. But one thing quenched my spirit, the highly sectarian attitude of the Church of Christ. It was sad to discover that this was universal, for every congregation seems to have this dogmatic, exclusivistic spirit. It is a stench in an otherwise fragrant church. I was elated to discover your journal and realize that I am not alone after all. What a blessing! -- *Craig Rogers, Garfield Heights, OH.*

(You have more blessings than you realize, for there are thousands in Churches of Christ who share your concern - and for a lot longer! We welcome you to the fellowship of Jesus and to the fellowship of the concerned ones (not always the same, unfortunately). We will in time overcome our exclusivism, if we will all hang in. --*Ed.)*

I recall a recent article on “The Dirty Dozen,” and I am afraid that we are going to have to become a “Dirty Two Dozen” and perhaps three dozen soon. Things have become totally unbearably oppressive. I never thought I would live to walk out of a Church of Christ with a group of dissenters, but it looks as though it will come to pass. I have counseled patience, peace and love for a long time, but an inquisition has been proposed into all sorts of matters of belief, all in the name of purity of doctrine and purity of the church. -- *Charles E. Gillen, 428 13th St., Oakland, Ca. 94612*

Yesterday the preacher used Heb. 10:25 (“Forsake not assembly”) for his text and for 45 minutes said not one word that would make us want to come back. He said that if we really loved God we would be there two hours on Sunday a.m. and one hour Sunday p.m. and one hour Wednesday p.m., leaving the impression that these are the only times you can make contact with God. -- *name withheld*

(You might make him a gift of *Be Brief About It,* by a Presbyterian minister who argues that ten minute sermons are more effective. If he heeds it, it would save lots of man hours for your congregation on Sundays and Wednesdays. As for the narrow view of worship, we

need to do some gentle persuasion for more openness. That kind of thing is on its way out, if that helps any. -- *Ed.)*

Your recent article on selecting elders was most intriguing. The point that the office of elder belongs to the congregation was well taken, though all too often in the "Church of Christ" the congregation belongs to the office. -- *Phil and Marsha Elam, Red Bank, TN.*

Many of your articles have been read and discussed in our meetings. Thank God that many more people are coming to understand what you are saying, and beyond that, *believing* it! Since we are now studying about elders, last Sunday we read your article "Are Elders to Select Elders?" It is amazing that as many studies as we have on the qualifications of elders they are always ignored when they are actually chosen. --*Wayne Miller, Newton, IA.*

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Address all mail to: 1201 Windsor Dr., Denton, TX 76201*

RESTORATION REVIEW is published monthly, except July and August, at 1201 Windsor Drive, Denton, Texas. Entered as second class mail, Denton, Texas. SUBSCRIPTION RATES: $4.00 a year, or two years for $7.00; in clubs of five or more (mailed by us to separate addresses) $2.00 per name per year. (USPS 044450). POSTMASTER: Send address changes to RESTORATION REVIEW, *1201 Windsor Dr., Denton, Texas 76201.